



ML  
410  
.W1  
A55

"Weisst du was du sah'st?"

PARSIFAL, Act i.

## The Meister.

VOL. I.

JULY 22, 1888.

No. 3.

### "PARSIFAL."—PART II.

"—mit blutigen Thränen,  
der göttliche weint' ob der Menschheit Schmach."



ER IST DER GRAL? Such is Parsifal's question, and the only reply that Gurnemanz can give is this, "Das sagt sich nicht." The exoteric meaning of the Gral is plain enough, the holy cup from which the Saviour drank the sacramental wine of the Last Supper, and wherein, so tradition says, his life-blood flowed in the last agony of the cross. But *this* could be expressed in words; that which could not be so expressed must ever be a mystery. It is the esoteric truth that underlies every religion, the inner essence that no terms of the intellect can convey. Each dogma passes over it, only adding a veil the more; each

ceremony but blinds our eyes with worldly pomp, and on it sheds no light. Ask the artist what it is that paints the picture in his brain, ere ever he draws the first outline on the canvas; ask the poet what it is that sends the vision to his inner sight ere he can pen his deathless words; ask the musician whence he receives the melody which only thus received can ring for ever in the ears of men. They cannot say; but yet they *feel* the source of their inspiration as something tangible and real, as something that vibrates in the ether surrounding them in harmony with their own inmost soul. That is what the Gral is. Wisdom not of man, Love not of this earth, and Truth that descends from above to lighten those who toil in weariness below. "No path leads to it through the land, and no one can the journey follow, whose footsteps it has not first sped." Mysticism, truly.

But what says Carlyle of mysticism? "Shakespeare dwelt perennially in its purest sphere," and again, "There are things invisible, such as are not only unseen by human eyes, but as cannot be seen by any eye; not objects of sense at all; not capable, in short, of being pictured or imaged in the mind, or in any way represented by a shape, either without the mind or within it. If any man shall here turn upon us and assert that there are no such invisible objects, that whatever cannot be pictured or imagined (meaning imaged) is nothing, and the science that relates to it nothing, we shall regret the circumstance. We shall request him, however, to consider seriously and deeply within himself, what he means simply by these two words, God and his own Soul; and whether he finds that visible shape and true existence are here also one and the same. If he still persists in denial, we have nothing for it but to wish him good speed on his separate path of inquiry, and he and we will agree to differ on this subject of mysticism, as on so many more important ones.

. . . . The Invisible world is near us, or rather, it is here, in us and about us; were the fleshly coil removed from our soul, the glories of the Unseen were even now around us, as the ancients fabled of the spherul music."

It is in this sense alone that the Gral can be conceived of; the chalice is but its outer symbol. Else why this secrecy surrounding it? It is enshrined in a temple built in a mountain's heart, and though the outer walls and dome might shine aloft, a beacon to mankind, yet no earthly path could point the way thereto. Perhaps the most significant passage in the whole drama is that when, amid the winding corridors of the approach, that seem themselves to move while Gurnemanz and Parsifal thread their way along them, the youth says, "I scarcely stir, and yet I seem to journey far," and Gurnemanz replies, "Thou seest, my son, that Time here changeth into Space." These words are full of meaning to any one who has studied the transcendental writings of Eastern sages, or of their western followers, Schopenhauer and Kant. The sentence is slightly involved, for condensation of thought is the very essence of the poems of Wagner, and a few brief lines are made by him, at times, to sum up a whole system of philosophy; but, viewed in the light of his later prose, we see at once that he alludes here to the condition of thought when the earth for the moment is left behind, and the untrammelled spirit, like Shakespeare's Puck, can "put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes"; more than this, can compass the whole of infinity and eternity in the freedom of its flight. It is thus alone that the Gral can be approached, and this is why its nature cannot be expressed in words.

In a short article, which Richard Wagner wrote in 1882, upon the first Parsifal Festival, then recently terminated, he gives a clear idea of what was in his mind when he framed for Gurnemanz this mysterious allusion to a state freed from the fetters of Time and Space; he says, "The unrolling of the moving scene (the change from the woods to the interior of the temple) was not merely for the purpose of decorative effect, howsoever artistic in its realization; but, by the influence of the accompanying music, we were, as though under the spell of a dream, to be borne almost imperceptibly along the trackless paths that led into the Gral's temple. Thus would its traditional

inaccessibility, for those whom it had not chosen for its own, be brought within the bounds of dramatic representation." In this manner are we led into the holy place "by paths the which no sinner findeth"; or, as applied to ourselves, the audience, when we have been prepared by the preceding scene for laying aside for the moment all the cares and worries of our every-day life. Had the temple-scene been that which first met our gaze after the last notes of the overture had died away, the effect of contrast with even the quiet world of the Bavarian town would have been too harsh; but, carried as we have been from the real woods outside the theatre to the forest of the Gral, and then gently led along the paths that seem to take us through the very bowels of the earth, the mystery is immensely heightened by the preparation.

When the last dark stairway has been trod, and the frowning rocks that guard the entrance to the sanctuary have sunk below the stage, we are shown, in the dim shades of twilight, the temple built by Titurel to serve as shrine for the holy cup and spear. As the light waxes ever brighter, we find ourselves (and there is no discordant influence around to rob us of the illusion that we too are among the brotherhood that meets to celebrate the rite) in a vast octagonal hall, crowned by a lofty dome, supported by arches of many-coloured marble. Except for the sculpture on the capitals, the mosaics in the spandrels, and the little gallery that runs around below the dome, the fane is bare of ornament. One chapel alone leads out of it, to form its apse, and this is guarded by low metal grilles, behind which lies the body of the half-inanimate Titurel. Yet the symmetry of the proportions of the architecture, and the glow of the rich warm tints of roof, walls, and pavement, make the sanctuary appear as though carved from an opal by Grecian hands. In the centre, raised upon three octagonal steps, is the altar, whereon the tabernacle is presently to be set; and from the altar stretch on either hand two semi-circular tables, flanked with benches. From the centre of the star-strewn dome pours down a flood of light upon the altar, and



from no other source ; for the only illumination here must needs come from above. Such is the Gral's abode, its whole conception simplicity of outline and majesty of form. It is the very embodiment of sacred rest.

The deep-toned bells are sounding forth their solemn notes, setting the rhythm that regulates the slow procession of the knights, who, clad in robes of soft grey-blue, with crimson mantles blazoned with the white symbol of the dove, march from behind the apse, and range themselves around the sacramental tables. Behind them is borne the litter carrying their king, Amfortas. His dress is distinguished in no way from that of the other knights ; no ornament or sign of kingly function. Wagner says, " The meaning of the king of this company of knights we sought in the true sense of the word 'king,' as the head of the race ; and chosen as such to be the defender of the Gral ; no distinction from the rest of the knights must he bear, save that of the mystic significance of the high function which was reserved for him alone, and of the weight of suffering which none but himself could gauge." Thus the brotherhood is a true brotherhood of mutual love and service, where the master is also the servant, and bears the burden of the world upon his shoulders in virtue of his royalty.

We may call to mind, in this relation, what Wagner has written, in his "State and Religion," on the subject of kingship : " From of old, myth and poem have portrayed the tragic element of man's nature most clearly and most often in the fate of Kings. Only in the fate and in the woes of kings can the tragic intent of the world be brought fully to our knowledge. The king's aim is an *ideal* aim ; he desires Justice and Humanity ; and if he desire them not, if he desire no more than that which the individual citizen desires, then will the very claim which is made upon him by his rank, and which permits him none but ideal interests, make him the betrayer of the *idea* which he represents, and cast him into sufferings, which have ever been the main subject of the inspiration of the tragic poet in his oft-told tale

of the fruitlessness of human life and human action. The individual who is called to the throne has no choice in the matter; he cannot listen to the voice of his own inclinations, and must fill a lofty station to which only high natural faculties are adequate. Thus to him is allotted a superhuman destiny which must needs crush a weak nature into nothingness." This passage will throw much light upon the manner in which Wagner has treated the king of the brotherhood of the Gral.

In Amfortas we have a character only rivalled in complexity by that of Kundry; each has its higher and its lower aspect, though with Kundry the latter has greater preponderance than with Amfortas. The contrast of the solemn office of the king and his passionate, emotional nature is most striking. Entrusted with the guardianship of the most sacred mysteries, and with the performance of rites which call for the greatest purity of heart, he falls through overweening pride. Secure in the feeling of his spiritual strength, he ventures forth alone to combat with the powers of evil, forgetting that the very essence of the Gral's brotherhood lies in its union. The desire of personal glory lures him to his doom; his enemy has prepared for him a trap into which he falls; his animal passions gain the upper hand, and the force of passion must wreak the uttermost of suffering before the horror of his sin can open out for him, and all, the path to higher knowledge which such suffering alone can clear. It is the very reaction caused by his remorse that prepares the way for the advent of Parsifal, whose compassion shall for ever still the torments of passion.

As the procession of the knights passes through the hall, the chant is sung wherein "the agony of the Saviour" is depicted; "the body which he offered in ransom for our sins lives now in us, by reason of his death." The Christ-principle of man has to descend through the jaws of death to the souls in hell to taste of their woes, or e'er it can rise triumphant to the realms above. Man cannot become perfect without suffering, and what suffering can ever compare with that engendered by remorse? Thus

Amfortas has to bear, as the scapegoat, the past sins of the community; to taste the hot, short joy of a moment's pleasure; and to bear in his own body the plague of sin until his higher nature, embodied here in Parsifal, can heal the wound. Has ever any poet approached the tragic pathos of this scene? Amfortas, in the agony of despair at his unworthiness, compelled to fulfil his duty as administrator of the holy rite. "What is the spear-wound, what its piercing smart, against the doom—the pains of hell, to be condemned unto this rite! Torment of heritage, to which I'm bound; I, only sinner midst ye all, to serve the highest mystery, on pure of heart to rain its blessing!" Here is the man of sense, the man of hot blood and turbulent fancy, supported by the man of mind, his faithful henchman, Gurnemanz, unmanned by the feeling of his worthlessness in the pure presence of the Gral! How is it that he yet can minister to his brethren within the holy temple? How can he, who has sinned, lift up before them the sacred cup? The older ruler, Titurel, still lives, though slowly dying, and by his command, as by the voice of conscience, it is that Amfortas is now bidden to dispense to the knights that knowledge with which he has been entrusted, even though the punishment of approaching sacred things with sin-stained hands may wring from him the last drop of his life-blood.

The Gral is unveiled, the holy blood glows with fresh life, and Amfortas sinks before it in agony of shame. The knights are free from the torment of desire which consumes his body with parching fever-heat; they rejoice in their own brotherhood, and in their own good deeds ("Wer guter That sich freu't, ihm sei das Mahl erneu't"), but have not tasted of the bitter fruit of self-knowledge, nor of the baptism of blood reserved for those who dare to press forward to unlock the gates of Nature's closest-guarded secrets. The bond of fellowship still unites them, though we shall see later in the drama that it is slackening, and, infected with the taint of Amfortas' sin, the brotherhood is losing its power to help the world. Amfortas has already promulgated the edict that the knights shall go forth no more into the world,

and shall thus avoid the perils and temptations the strength of which he has so crushingly felt. The very heart of religion has been wounded, and the members shall soon lose the power once derived from it. It is this that stings Amfortas with remorse, even before the altar of his faith. A worship that must henceforth bear to the outer world no fruits is already moribund, and only the promised redeemer can restore its life, in bearing in his own person the banner of truth unharmed right into the midst of the hostile ranks of sin and deceit. Amfortas knows the powerlessness of the knights, enfeebled by his fall, to carry out this mission, and this it is which fills him with despair. The knights as yet are blind to their coming sorrow; holding to their traditions, they are content, and wist not of the real nature of their ruler's torment. For Parsifal alone is this reserved. Even he as yet but dimly feels it; a momentary smiting on the breast is the sole indication that he has touched, ever so lightly, on the hidden spring of the sufferings of Amfortas. Out from the temple he must go, himself to learn, by contact with its cause, the secret of another's woe. Yet, even as he is thrust forth, there sounds from the height of the cupola, the *Thoren motiv*, the same words of promise that, in answer to the bitter cry of the king, had nerved him once more for the performance of the holy rite; and we know their prophecy shall be fulfilled, and that the stone that the builders rejected shall become the head-stone of the corner.

In the second act the education of Parsifal is commenced, an education not from books or moral codes, but from his personal conflict with the powers of evil. Klingsor, the magician, is sitting in the keep of his castle, surrounded by the paraphernalia of his black art, and swathed in sable garments. The red turban which he wears (which, by the way, has been discarded, for some unaccountable reason, since Wagner's death in favour of a white turban) is the distinctive mark in the East of the sorcerers who use their knowledge of the secret forces of nature for the furtherance of black magic, in pursuance of inordinate selfish ambition,



and who are called from their wearing of this colour the *Dugpas* (red caps). This solitary figure is in marked contrast to the knights who have banded together for deeds of mercy. With them their union was their strength; Klingsor, however, stands here alone, the personification of the lower self, of the man who, by crushing out all pity, has won a power which brooks no equal, and to whom all other beings are either enemies or slaves. For the first time in the drama the stage is occupied by a single personage, the magician who has separated himself from all the world, and found in his solitude his might. Gurnemanz has told us ere this how Klingsor, unable to conquer his own evil passions, had laid upon himself the desecrating hand that robbed him of his higher self; how he had, in biblical phrase, committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, slaying deliberately, in pursuit of power, the divine spirit that dwells in man. Bulwer Lytton has described such a man in his "Strange Story," in the character of Margrave, a character whose vigour of treatment must always remain one of the most remarkable efforts of poetic intuition. Like Margrave, we find Klingsor employing the means that have been enshrined in all the records of sorcery from remotest times: the mirror, the crystal, and the fumes of incense. In the depths of the polished sphere he sees the youth approaching, and knows that his deadliest enemy, purity of heart, is now at hand. One being alone can assist him in his work of contemplated corruption; Kundry must awake from sleep and do his bidding. Called forth by the magic of his incantations, by invocations in the name of the personalities which she has taken on in the centuries of wandering of her vexed spirit over the earth—Herodias, Rose of Hell, Gundryggia, and many more—her form appears in the midst of the clouds of incense he has spread around.

Here begins a scene of the most diabolical energy, which we can scarcely witness without a shudder. The motif of Klingsor winds like a fiery dragon through all the dialogue, crushing in its folds the helpless victim, and hissing out the venom of his hate of every holy thing; while Kundry's

anguished theme falls, octave by octave, in helpless cries of agony, ending in despair. The poor soul is writhing in torture at the horrible deed she is called on to perform, and is powerless to refuse. "Desire, desire!" like Amfortas, she wails forth. This is her curse. "I will not," she cries. "Well wil'st thou, since thou *must*," replies Klingsor. "Thou canst not hold me to it." "Nay, but bind thee." Well he knows that her lower will is stronger than her higher wish. Then, in response to her cry for redemption, he tells her, "He who renounces thee, alone can set thee free." Kundry is the body, with all its fierce desires, the counterpart of Parsifal, who represents the higher aspect of the soul. She is under the dominion of Klingsor, whom we have seen to typify the lowest side of the animal soul, and therefore at eternal enmity with all higher motives. Torn by conflicting emotions, she must ever remain the type of matter, hovering between heaven and hell, now in the service of the knights, now in the slavery of the magician, until one higher than them all shall rescue her for ever from the sorcerer's toils, from her own evil passions, and give her peace. By her it was that Amfortas fell, in listening to the voice of the flesh; for his bodily wound alone she cares and brings the balsam—even while she brings it owning its little use; for through the body she has set a plague-spot on his soul, and she knows that no material means can heal its hurt. Thus, too, we shall find her promising, against her own convictions, to Parsifal "the *body* and the life," which shall be his reward for compliance with her wish; and later, like the Magdalene, washing the Redeemer's feet and offering the oil with which to anoint his head. Her care is always for the body. Longing for rest, longing for death, longing to be once more dissolved in the wide substance of her mother Earth, she bears the punishment of the Wandering Jewess, who scoffed at Spirit, laughed at Christ in the agony of the cross, and is now doomed to pass from life to life, tempting and falling, reaping in one life the evil seed she has sown in its predecessor. Only he who can renounce in her the fleeting pleasures of the flesh, and pitying

lift her from the mire, can set her free. Parsifal, the pure of heart, is even now upon the castle's battlements, and shuddering at the horrible task set before her of engaging in a battle where victory, if she gain it, must doom her for ever to this accursed life, she departs, with a wail of horror, to do her master's bidding.

---

**SCENE FROM TRISTAN.—ACT I.**

ISOLDE *rises with gestures of rage and despair.*

BRANGANE *throwing herself at her feet.*

SHAME and sorrow,  
such to suffer !

ISOLDE *on the brink of a terrible outburst, quickly collecting herself.*

The news from Tristan !  
With truth see that thou tell it.

BRANGANE. O seek it not !

ISOLDE. Forth speak without fear.

BRANGANE. In courtly words  
aloof he kept.

ISOLDE. But when he well had listened ? . . .

BRANGANE. When plain I hither  
bade him haste,  
his answer was:  
where'er he be,  
his heed is first for her,  
the flower of woman's worth ;  
rests he not near  
the rudder now,  
how leads he meetly the keel  
to Mark' of Cornwall's land ?

ISOLDE, *with bitter intensity.*

" How leads he meetly the keel  
to Mark' of Cornwall's land ? " . . .  
to count him out his cargo  
of tithe from Ireland's King !

BRANGANE.

At sound of what I told him  
thy tongue itself had said,  
his henchman-comrade Kurwena

ISOLDE.

No word of all he sent me,  
but what I heard it well!  
My wrong thou here hast witnessed  
now hearken whence it arose.—

In songs as loud  
and suchlike laughter  
with ease my lips might answer . . .  
about a lost  
and lonely boat,  
on Ireland's coast that lit;  
a man inside it,  
sick and maimed,  
at door of death was seen.

Isolde's leech-craft  
soon he learned;  
with balm-salves  
and with balsam-sap  
the hurt that so hard beset him  
her hand was swift to soothe.

Though "Tantris"  
was the name in whose craft he had caught her,  
yet to "Tristan"

to turn it it soon was taught her,  
when, nigh to his sword once seated,  
on a notch in it lo she lighted

and found it fit  
a shard she brought it,  
which Morold's head,  
the day she thought it  
a scorn that scarred her land,  
had left in her heedful hand.—

My deepest soul  
its groan upsent;  
with the sheathless sword  
I tow'rds him went,



with him, for his over-mettle  
in Morold's death, to settle.

From where he rested  
rose his look,—  
not on the sword,  
not on my hand,

but fixed on my face he held it.

With his wretched hap  
my heart was wrung ;

the sword . . . I downward sank it ;  
from the wound, that so fretted and wore him,  
I healed him . . . and stood before him . . .  
and freed him without guerdon, . .  
of his look to lose the burden.

BRANGANE.

O wonder ! Where had I my wits ?

The guest I helped  
to guard and heal . . . ?

ISOLDE.

His praise but now thou heardest :

" Tristan our hero hail ! "—

He was it we saw so pale !—

A thousand oaths he swore me  
of faith and thankful service.

Now hark how a hero's  
oaths are held ! . . .

Who, as Tantris,

unseen had homeward slunken,  
as Tristan,

boldly floats him back

a flaunting ship

of lordly shape ;

Ireland's heiress

he comes to ask

as bride for Mark' his kinsman,

for Cornwall's listless King.

Ere Morold's death

what man would have dared

a scorn of such depth to do us ?

## THE MEISTER.

For tithe-plight Cornwall  
 at Ireland's crown  
 with open face to aim !—  
 Ah shame ! Unwittingly  
 I it was  
 who bared myself  
 to such a blow !  
 The venging sword  
 not in vain to have seized,  
 my fist should have plunged it faster ; . . .  
 now find I my vassal master.

BRANGANE. When faith and peace and friendship  
 in sight of all were sworn to,  
 we deemed it a burdenless day ;  
 no trace I beheld  
 of the hurt that it tore in thy heart !

ISOLDE. O blunted eyes !  
 O blinded bosoms !—  
 O daunted soul !  
 O dastard silence !—  
 How boldly out  
 he boasted the whole  
 of what so well I hid ! . . .  
 Whose dumbness kept him  
 safe from death,  
 whose silence foiled  
 his searching foes,  
 the secret of all  
*her* wordless aid  
 to the light open he laid.  
 With heart and look  
 uplifted high,  
 in my praise aloud  
 he prated at lip !  
 " Of such a Sweet,  
 my kinsman-king,  
 how ween you for a wife ?

The Irish filly  
 let me fetch ;  
 I've stridden ev'ry  
 step before ;  
 a nod—I hie  
 to her once more ;  
 she's yours in little after ;  
 the feat is light as laughter !"—  
 For curses and hate  
 be kept his head !  
 Vengeance ! Death !  
 Death to us both !

BRANGANE, *with impetuous tenderness, throwing her arms  
 round ISOLDE.*

Isolde ! Dearest !  
 Fairest ! Sweetest !  
 Thy fancy how  
 with words thou heatest !  
 Think not ! Mind not !  
 Sit by me !—

*She draws ISOLDE gradually to the couch.*

Whence such a whim ?  
 Such empty wildness ?  
 What makes thee deem so madly,  
 behold and hear so badly ?  
 For aught, to what  
 Sir Tristan owes thee,  
 couldst thou better be beholden  
 than a crown so great and golden ?  
 King Mark' he serves  
 by such a deed,  
 and meets thee too  
 with truest meed ;  
 his goodly heirdom  
 he all foregoes,  
 a gift at thy feet to make it,  
 as Queen to behold thee take it.]

ISOLDE *turns away*; BRANGANE *continues*.

And when to his Uncle  
it is that he weds thee,  
is it meet that the choice be chidden?  
In Mark' is thy worth not bidden?  
So high of mood,  
so mild of heart,  
who matches the man  
in light and might?  
Whom such a hero  
so truly serves,  
who might not as mate abide him,  
and sit in his wealth beside him?

ISOLDE, *with fixed and vacant look*.

Unbeloved  
of the lordly man,  
to see him for ever near me . . .  
like flame to the soul it would sear me!

BRANGANE.

What fills thy fancy?  
Unbeloved!  
Where left is the man  
who could fail to love thee,  
who Isold' could see  
and in Isold'  
not madden to melt his soul?  
Were he thou hast chosen  
chill to the heart,  
fixed him a spell  
of freezing spite,  
his unheeding mood  
with haste were mended  
by help of Frau Minne's might.

*Mysteriously, going close to ISOLDE.*

Thy mother's arts  
forgettest thou all?



Could it hap that she,  
so sharp of heed,  
without help in a stranger's land  
would send me beside thee to stand ?

ISOLDE, *gloomily*. My mother's arts  
I keep in mind ;  
of handiwork  
her ways I hail :  
vengeance wreaked upon wrong,  
balm for the heart when bursting !—  
The casket here let me have.

BRANGANE. It holds thy safest help.

*She fetches a small golden coffer, opens it, and points to its contents.*

In row so ranged thy mother  
the mighty wonder-waters :  
for bite or wound  
the balsam-wash ;  
for baneful draught  
its backward bane ;—  
but here the master-  
drink I hold.

ISOLDE. Forbear, I know it better ;  
outside it deep  
a sign I dug ;—  
but *this* there is none I shall need !

*She seizes one of the flasks, and shows it to BRANGANE.*

BRANGANE, *recoiling in horror*. The death-water ! No !

THE CREW, *outside*. Hi ! Ha ! Ho ! Hi !  
Slack the foresheet !  
Lighten sail !

ISOLDE, *who has risen from the couch and listened with increasing horror to the sailors' cries* :—

That means we have made good way.  
Woe to me ! Near is the land.

(Translated by ALFRED FORMAN.)

SCHOPENHAUER'S "DIE WELT ALS WILLE  
UND VORSTELLUNG."—(Continued.)

Yes ! in the sea of life enisled,  
 With echoing straits between us thrown,  
 Dotting the shoreless watery wild,  
 We mortal millions live *alone*.  
 The islands feel the encircling flow,  
 And then their endless bounds they know.  
 But when the moon their hollows lights,  
 And they are swept by balms of spring,  
 And in their glens, on starry nights,  
 The nightingales divinely sing ;  
 And lovely notes, from shore to shore,  
 Across the sounds and channels pour—  
 Oh ! then a longing like despair  
 Is to their farthest caverns sent ;  
 For surely once, they feel, we were  
 Parts of a single Continent !  
 Now round us spreads the watery plain—  
 Oh might our margs meet again !  
 Who order'd, that their longing's fire  
 Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd ?  
 Who renders vain their deep desire ?—  
 A God ! a God their severance ruled !  
 And bade betwixt their shores to be  
 The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

**T**HE first volume of "Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung" is divided into four parts, two of which treat of the world as "Vorstellung," *i.e.*, representation, presentment, idea (or literally, *a placing before*) ; and two of the world as "Wille,"—will. The world as Vorstellung (*i.e.*, the world regarded as the entire area of phenomena cognized by our perceptions), is held to be the non-existent, sense-world of Plato ; a world existing in the consciousness of the beholder, but not, therefore and of

necessity, an objective reality. That which we know is not a sun and an earth, but only an eye that sees a sun, a hand that feels an earth; the world surrounding us is there only as representation, *i.e.*, only in relation to something else, the consciousness, which is ourself. Everything, therefore, that exists for knowledge is only object in relation to subject—"the perception of a perceiver, in a word, 'Vorstellung.'" Berkeley and, moreover, Descartes, with his formula *Cogito, ergo sum*, which appeared to him to be the sole unassailable verity, each did service in defence of this view; while in ancient India it constituted a fundamental tenet of the Vedânta philosophy, as Sir Wm. Jones's words in the "Asiatic Researches" (vol. iv., p. 164) testify. "The fundamental tenet of the Vedânta school consisted not in denying the existence of matter, that is of solidity, impenetrability, and extended figure (to deny which would be lunacy), but in correcting the popular notion of it, and in contending that it has no existence independent of mental perception; that existence and perceptibility are convertible terms."

In the first and third books, then, Schopenhauer considers the world from this side, only so far as it is "Vorstellung." He says, "the World is my 'Vorstellung.'" But in the second and fourth books he regards the world from an entirely different side, correcting the defectiveness of his former view by means of a truth which is not perhaps so immediately certain as that from which he started, a truth "at which," he says, "we can arrive only by deeper research and more severe abstraction, by the separation of what is different, and the union of what is identical. This truth, which must be very serious and impressive, if not awful, to everyone, is that a man can also say, and must say—'The World is my Will.'"

As an attempt to throw light upon what, by the foregoing words, may be difficult of comprehension, let us say that, with Schopenhauer, the great living fact underlying all phenomena, the essence or true being of everything (the "Ding an Sich," the endeavour to arrive at which Kant gave up as impossible), is

WILL. Kant's fundamental result has been concisely stated by Schopenhauer to be this: "All conceptions which have not their foundation in space and time (sensuous intuition), that is to say, which have not been drawn from such a perception, are absolutely empty, *i.e.*, give no knowledge. But since perception can afford us only phenomena, not things in themselves, we have also absolutely no knowledge of things in themselves." Commenting upon Kant's position, our philosopher goes on to say: "I grant this of everything, with the single exception of the knowledge which each of us has of his own *willing*; this is neither a perception (for all perception is spacial) nor is it empty; rather it is more real than any other. Further, it is not *à priori*, like merely formal knowledge, but entirely *à posteriori*; hence also we cannot anticipate it in the particular case, but are hereby often convicted of error concerning ourselves. In fact, our *willing* is the one opportunity which we have of understanding from within any event which exhibits itself without, consequently the one thing which is known to us *immediately*, and not, like all the rest, merely given in the idea. Here, then, lies the datum which alone is able to become the key to everything else, or, as I have said, the single narrow door to the truth. Accordingly, we must learn to understand nature from ourselves, not conversely, ourselves from nature. What is known to us immediately must give us the explanation of what we only know indirectly, not conversely. Do we perhaps understand the rolling of a ball when it has received an impulse more thoroughly than our movement when we feel a motive? Many may imagine so, but I say it is the reverse. Yet we shall attain to the knowledge that what is essential in both the occurrences just mentioned is identical, although identical in the same way as the lowest audible note of harmony is the same as the note of the same name ten octaves higher." (Vol. II., pp. 405-6, Haldane and Kemp's translation). And in other passages from the same essay ("On the Will in Self-Consciousness," he says: "Now, that which in *every* animal consciousness, even the most imperfect and the



weakest, is always present, nay, lies at its foundation, is an immediate sense of *longing*, and of the alternate satisfaction and non-satisfaction of it, in very different degrees. . . . We know that the animal *wills*, indeed also *what* it wills—existence, well-being, life, and propagation; and since in this we pre-suppose, with perfect certainty, identity with us, we do not hesitate to attribute to it unchanged all the affections of will which we know ourselves, and speak at once of its desire, aversion, fear, anger, hatred, love, joy, sorrow, longing, &c. . . . The gulf which lies between a very sagacious brute and a man of very limited capacity, is perhaps not much greater than that which exists between a blockhead and a man of genius."

From these passages, and more especially from those which are now to follow, it is obvious that, in Schopenhauer's hands, the word "Will" is intended to embrace more than we understand strictly to be involved in it. The meaning of the word becomes expanded from that which Bain, *e.g.*, attaches to it. Will, as hitherto understood by us, may be defined as "Action, prompted by feeling." But with Schopenhauer Will is something more than an act of volition; it is our genius, our substance, our true being; it is the metaphysical kernel, the radical element, not only in the subjective self, but in all phenomena—*i.e.*, at the bottom of the objective world also, although manifested in different degrees from the lowest to the highest forms of life—inorganic to organic. Whoever has gained a knowledge *in abstracto* of what every one knows directly *in concreto*,—*i.e.*, as feeling, a knowledge that his will is the real inner nature of his phenomenal being,—will find, as Schopenhauer says, "that of itself it affords him the key to the knowledge of the inmost being of the whole of nature; for he now transfers it to all those phenomena which are not given to him, like his own phenomenal existence, both in direct and indirect knowledge, but only in the latter, thus merely one-sidedly as *idea* alone. He will recognise this Will of which we are speaking, not only in those phenomenal existences which exactly resemble his own, in men and animals as

their inmost nature, but the course of reflection will lead him to recognize the force which germinates and vegetates in the plant, and, indeed, the force through which the crystal is formed, that by which the magnet turns to the North Pole, the force whose shock he experiences from the contact of two different kinds of metals, the force which appears in the elective affinities of matter as repulsion and attraction, decomposition and combination, and, lastly, even gravitation, which acts so powerfully throughout matter, draws the stone to the earth and the earth to the sun—all these, I say, he will recognize as different only in their phenomenal existence, but in their inner nature as identical, as that which is directly known to him so intimately, and so much better than anything else, and which, in its most distinct manifestation, is called *will*. . . . This is the inmost nature, the kernel, of every particular thing, and also of the whole. It appears in every blind force of nature, and also in the pre-considered action of man; and the great difference between these two is merely in the degree of the manifestation, not in the nature of what manifests itself." (pp. 142-3, H. & K.)

And as a clearly-expressed exposition of the widened conception of will which our philosopher postulates, and the reasons which dictated his selection of the word rather than that of *force*, the following passage, which it is impossible to condense, must be quoted :—

"Hitherto it was not recognized that every kind of active and operating force in nature is essentially identical with will, and, therefore, the multifarious kinds of phenomena were not seen to be merely different species of the same genus, but were treated as heterogeneous. Consequently, there could be no word to denote the concept of this genus. I, therefore, name the genus after its most important species, the direct knowledge of which lies nearer to us, and guides us to the indirect knowledge of all other species. But, whoever is incapable of carrying out the required extension of the concept will remain involved in a permanent misunderstanding. For, by the word *will* he understands only that species of it which has hitherto been exclusively denoted by it, the will which is guided by knowledge, and whose manifestation follows only upon motives, and, indeed, merely abstract motives, and thus takes place under the guidance of the reason. This, we have said, is only the most prominent example of the manifestation of

will. We must now distinctly separate in thought the inmost essence of this manifestation, which is known to us directly, and then transfer it to all the weaker, less distinct manifestations of the same nature, and thus we shall accomplish the desired extension of the concept of will. From another point of view I should be equally misunderstood by any one who should think that it is all the same in the end whether we denote this inner nature of all phenomena by the word *will* or by any other. This would be the case if the thing-in-itself were something whose existence we merely *inferred*, and thus knew indirectly and only in the abstract. Then, indeed, we might call it what we pleased; the name would stand merely as the symbol of an unknown quantity. But the word *will* which, like a magic spell, discloses to us the inmost being of everything in nature, is by no means an unknown quantity—something arrived at only by inference, but is fully and immediately comprehended, and is so familiar to us that we know and understand what will is far better than anything else whatever. The concept of will has hitherto commonly been subordinated to that of *force*, but I reverse the matter entirely, and desire that every force in nature should be thought as will. It must not be supposed that this is mere verbal quibbling, or of no consequence; rather it is of the greatest significance and importance. For at the foundation of the concept of force, as of all other concepts, there ultimately lies the knowledge in sense-perception of the objective world, that is to say, the phenomenon, the idea, and the concept is constructed out of this. It is an abstraction from the province in which cause and effect reign, *i.e.*, from ideas of perception, and means just the causal nature of causes at the point at which this causal nature is no further etiologically explicable, but is the necessary pre-supposition of all etiological explanation. The concept will, on the other hand, is, of all possible concepts the only one which has its source *not* in the phenomenal, *not* in the mere idea of perception, but comes from within, and proceeds from the most immediate consciousness of each of us, in which each of us knows his own individuality, according to its nature, immediately, apart from all form, even that of subject and object, and which, at the same time, is this individuality, for here the subject and the object of knowledge are one. If, therefore, we refer the concept of *force* to that of *will*, we have, in fact, referred the less known to what is infinitely better known; indeed, to the one thing that is really immediately and fully known to us, and have very greatly extended our knowledge. If, on the contrary, we subsume the concept of will under that of force, as has hitherto always been done, we renounce the only immediate knowledge which we have of the inner nature of the world, for we allow it to disappear in a concept which is abstracted from the phenomenal, and with which we can never, therefore, go beyond the phenomenal.\* (pp. 143-5, Vol. I.)

The "Wille," therefore, is something entirely different from "Vorstellung"; it lies outside Space and Time, and, *au fond*, is not subject to the *principium individuationis*. In reality the will

\* How far this attacks the Spencerian position is obvious.

is ONE, and, in a measure, is synonymous with what the Vedānta philosophers called Parabrahm. As Schopenhauer points out, the multiplicity of things in space and time, which, collectively, constitute the objectification of will, does not affect the will itself, which remains indivisible notwithstanding it. "It is not the case," says he, "that in some way or other a smaller part of will is in the stone and a larger part in the man, for the relation of part and whole belongs exclusively to space, and has no longer any meaning when we go beyond this form of intuition or perception. The more and the less have application only to the phenomenon of will,—that is, its visibility, its objectification. Of this there is a higher grade in the plant than in the stone; in the animal a higher grade than in the plant; indeed, the passage of will into visibility, its objectification, has grades as innumerable as exist between the dimmest twilight and the brightest sunshine, the loudest sound and the faintest echo. . . . The will reveals itself as completely and as much in *one* oak as in millions." (pp. 166-7, Vol. I.)

An important point should here be noted. Although Schopenhauer claimed that he had accomplished the god-like feat of passing over the line of demarcation marked out by Kant as the limit of the knowable, he did not claim that what the will is in itself, *ultimately and absolutely*, could ever be ascertained. On the contrary, he expressly said that this question could never be answered, and that we must content ourselves with this immediate consciousness of the will as manifested in ourselves and everything around us.

It will follow as a corollary to all the foregoing remarks that the intellect should be considered as secondary to the will. Most, if not all, other philosophers have placed the true being, or the kernel of man, in the knowing consciousness, "and accordingly," as Schopenhauer says, "have conceived and explained the I,—or, in the case of many of them, its transcendental hypostasis called soul,—as primarily and essentially *knowing*, nay *thinking*, and, only in consequence of this, secondarily and deri-



vatively, as *willing*." But with our philosopher this position is completely reversed. The intellect is declared always to present itself as secondary, subordinate, and conditioned; while the reason of the neglect of this truth by former thinkers, especially those of the Christian era, is held to be partly explicable from the fact that they all had the intention of presenting man as distinguished as widely as possible from the brutes, yet at the same time obscurely felt that the difference between them lies in the intellect, not in the will; "whence," writes Schopenhauer, "there arose unconsciously within them an inclination to make the intellect the essential and principal thing, and even to explain volition as a mere function of the intellect. Hence also the conception of a soul is not only inadmissible, because it is a transcendent hypostasis, as is proved by the 'Critique of Pure Reason,' but it becomes the source of irremediable errors, because in its 'simple substance' it establishes beforehand an indivisible unity of knowledge and will, the separation of which is just the path to the truth. That conception must, therefore, appear no more in philosophy, but may be left to German doctors and physiologists, who, after they have laid aside scalpel and spatula, amuse themselves by philosophizing with the conceptions they received when they were confirmed. They might certainly try their luck in England. The French physiologists and zootomists have (till lately) kept themselves free from that reproach."

This passage is supplemented by the following pregnant remarks, which can hardly fail to carry conviction with them:—

"The first consequence of their common fundamental error, which is very inconvenient to all these philosophers, is this: since in death the knowing consciousness obviously perishes, they must either allow death to be the annihilation of the man, to which our inner being is opposed, or they must have recourse to the assumption of a continued existence of the knowing consciousness, which requires a strong faith, for his own experience has sufficiently proved to every one the thorough and complete dependence of the knowing consciousness upon the brain, and one can just as easily believe in digestion without a stomach as in a knowing consciousness without a brain. My philosophy alone leads out of this dilemma, for it for the first time places the true being of man not in the

consciousness, but in the will, which is not essentially bound up with consciousness, but is related to consciousness—*i.e.* to knowledge, as substance to accident, as the light to something illuminated, as the string to the resounding board, and which enters consciousness from within as the corporeal world does from without. Now we can comprehend the indestructibleness of this our real kernel and true being, in spite of the evident ceasing of consciousness in death, and the corresponding non-existence of it before birth; for the intellect is as perishable as the brain, whose product, or rather whose action, it is. But the brain, like the whole organism, is the product or phenomenon—in short, the subordinate—of the will, which alone is imperishable."

(*To be continued.*)

CHARLES DOWDESWELL.

## ART AND REVOLUTION.

*Translated from Richard Wagner's "Die Kunst und die Revolution," 1849.*

### PART II.

**T**HE Grecian Zeus, the father of all life, sent a messenger from Olympus to the gods in their wanderings through the world, the young fair god Hermes. The embodied thought of Zeus was he; winged he rushed from the heights above to the depths below, to proclaim the omnipresence of the sovereign god. Ever present at the death of men, he led their shades into the still realm of night; for wherever the stern necessity of the order of Nature showed clearly forth, Hermes was visible in action as the fulfilled thought of Zeus.

The Romans had a god whom they likened to the Grecian Hermes. But with them his winged mission gained a more practical intent; for them it was the restless diligence of their chaffering and usurious merchants, who streamed from all the ends of the earth into the heart of the Roman world to bring the luxurious masters of that world, in barter for solid gain, all the

delights of sense which their own immediately surrounding country could not afford them. To the Roman, surveying its nature and its methods, commerce seemed to be no more nor less than trickery, and though, by reason of his ever-growing luxury, this world of trade appeared a necessary evil, yet he cherished a deep contempt for its doings. Thus the god of the mercantile world, Mercury, became for him the god of cheats and sharpers.

The despised god, however, revenged himself upon the arrogant Romans, and usurped their mastery of the world. For, crown his head with the halo of Christian (?) dissimulation, decorate his breast with the soulless tokens of dead feudal orders of knighthood, and ye have in him the god of the modern world, the holy, noble god of "five per cent," the ruler and the master of the ceremonies of our modern—art. Ye may see him embodied in a strait-laced English banker, whose daughter perchance has been given in marriage to a ruined peer. Ye may see him in this gentleman, when he engages the first singers of the Italian Opera to sing before him in his own drawing-room rather than in the theatre, because he will have the glory of paying higher for them here than there; but on no account even here, on the sacred Sunday. Behold Mercury and his docile slave, Modern Art!

This is the art which is now enthroned in the whole civilized world! Its true essence is Industry, its ethical aim the gaining of gold, its æsthetic purpose the entertainment of those whose time hangs heavily on their hands. From the heart of our modern society, from the meeting-point of its crossing-roads, the giant Speculation, our art sucks forth its sap, borrows a hollow grace from the lifeless relics of the conventionalities of mediæval chivalry, and—with all its professions of Christianity, blushing not to fleece the poor—descends to the depths of the proletariat, enervating, demoralizing, and dehumanizing everything on which it pours the venom of its life-juice.

Its pleasance it has set up in the Theatre, just as did the art of Greece in its maturity; and it has a claim upon the theatre

as the expression of the accepted views of the life of the day. Our modern stage-art incorporates the ruling spirit of our social life, and publishes its daily record in a way that no other branch of art can accomplish; for it prepares its feasts, night in night out, in almost every town of Europe. Thus, as the pre-eminently widespread art of drama, it seems to draw the faithful picture of the flower of our culture, just as the Grecian tragedy portrayed the culmination of Grecian genius: but ours is the efflorescence of corruption of a hollow, soul-less, unnatural condition of human affairs.

This condition we need not here characterize further; we need only search, in candour, the contents and the workings of our public art, especially that of the stage, in order to see the spirit of the times reflected therein as in a faithful mirror, for such a mirror has art ever been.

Thus we recognize in our public theatrical art by no means the true drama, the one indivisible, grandest creation of the mind of man. Our theatre offers us but the convenient frame for the tempting exhibition of the heterogeneous wares of art-manufacture. How incapable our stage is to gather up each branch of art in its highest and most perfect expression, the Drama, it shows at once in its division into the two classes, Play and Opera; whereby the idealizing influence of music is forbidden to the play, and the opera is deprived of the very essence of drama, its high purpose of truthfulness. On the one hand, the spoken play can never, with few exceptions, lift itself to the ideal flight of poetry; but—even without taking into consideration the influence of the demoralization of our public life—for very reason of the poverty of its means of expression, must fall from height to depth, from the warm atmosphere of passion into the cold element of intrigue. On the other hand, the opera becomes a chaos of sensuous impressions, jostling one another without rhyme or reason, from which each one may select at will what pleases best his fancy, here the alluring motion of a dancer, there the *bravura* passage of a singer, here the dazzling effect of a stage-carpenter-scene,

there the astounding efforts of a Vulcan of the orchestra. Do we not read from day to day that this or that new opera is a masterpiece because it contains a goodly number of fine *arias* and duets, that the instrumentation of the orchestra is brilliant, &c. ? The object which alone can justify the use of such complex means, the great dramatic purpose—folk never give that so much as a thought. Such criticisms are commonplace, but honest; they show exactly what is the position of the audience. There are even many of our most popular artists who do not in the least conceal the fact that they have no other ambition than to satisfy such a commonplace audience. They are wise in their generation; for when the prince leaves a heavy dinner, the banker a fatiguing financial operation, the working man a weary day's toil, and goes to the theatre, he wishes to find rest, distraction, and amusement, and is in no mood for fresh effort and renewed expenditure of force. This reason is so manifest, that we can only reply to it by saying that it would be more consistent to employ for this purpose any other means than those of such an aim as Art. Yet we shall then be told that, if we do not employ art in this manner, it must perish from out our public life, and that, with its decease, the artist will lose the means whereby to live.

On this side everything is lamentable, but candid, avowed, and honest: the civilized degradation of modern Christianity.

But what shall we say when we find the same conditions ruling most of the art-heroes of our times, whose fame is now the order of the day, and who assume a hypocritical pretence to art, putting on the melancholy counterfeit of true artistic inspiration, racking their brains for thoughts of deep intent, seeking ever for sensational effects, setting heaven and hell in motion, and all the while behaving like those honest journeymen of art who confess that one must not be too particular if one wishes to sell one's goods. What shall we say when these heroes seek not *alone* to entertain, but expose themselves to the peril of engendering fatigue, so that they may be credited with deep significance ;



when, too, they renounce any great profit from the transaction, and even—though only one born to riches can afford that—spend their own money upon their productions, and thus offer up the highest modern sacrifice of self? To what purpose is all this waste? Alas, there is yet one thing beside gold, a thing that nowadays a man may purchase as any other pleasure: that thing is FAME! Yet what sort of fame is it that our public art can reach? Only the fame of the same publicity for which this art is planned, and which the ambitious man can obtain alone by submission to its most trivial requisitions. Thus he deludes both himself and the public, in giving it his piebald art-production; while the public deludes both itself and him, in giving him its applause. This mutual lie is worthy of the lying nature of modern fame itself, as we interpret it when we cloak our own self-seeking passions under the lies of such sweet-sounding names as "Patriotism," "Honour," "Law and Order," &c. &c.

Yet, why do we deem it necessary so publicly to cheat each one the other? Because these ideas and these virtues are, under all the circumstances that rule us, present in our conscience; though truly in our *guilty* conscience. For it is sure that, where honour and truth are really present, there also is true art at hand. The greatest and most noble minds—whom Æschylus and Sophocles would have greeted with the kiss of brotherhood—have for centuries raised their voices in the wilderness. We have heard their cry, and it lingers still in our ears; but from our base and idle hearts we have washed away its living echo. We tremble at their fame, but mock their art; we admit their rank as artists of lofty aim, but deny them the realization of their art; for the one great and true art-work they cannot bring to life unaided; we, too, must help them in its birth. The tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles were the creations of all Athens!

What is the use of the fame of these masters? What serves it that Shakespeare, as a second creator, opened up for us the endless realm of true human nature? What serves it that Beethoven has lent to Music the manly, independent strength

of Poetry? Ask the threadbare caricatures of your theatres, ask the commonplace street-songs of your operas, and ye have your answer! But, do ye need to ask? Alas, no! Ye know it right well; ye would not even have it otherwise; ye only give yourselves the air as though ye knew it not!

What now is your Art, and what your Drama?

The Revolution of February deprived the theatres of public support; many of them were on the brink of bankruptcy. After the events of June, Cavaignac, busied with the maintenance of the existing order of society, came to their assistance and demanded a subvention for their continuance. Why? Because the breadless classes, the *proletariat*, would be augmented by their ruin. So; this interest alone has the State in the stage! It sees in it an industrial workshop; and, to boot, an influence that may calm the passions and divert the agitation of the threatening attitude and excited condition of public opinion, which broods in deepest discontent, seeking for the way by which degenerate human nature may once more return to a natural state, even though it be at the cost of the annihilation of our—so appropriate theatrical institutions!

The avowal is candid, and on all fours with the candour of the admission is the complaint of our modern artists and their grudge against the Revolution. Yet what has Art in common with these precautions, and what in common with these complaints?

Let us now compare the chief characteristics of the public art of modern Europe with those of the public art of the Greeks, so as to set clearly before our eyes their difference.

The public art of the Greeks, which reached in Tragedy its zenith, was the expression of the deepest and the noblest principles of the people's consciousness; with us the deepest and noblest of man's consciousness is the direct opposite of this, the denunciation of our public art. To the Greeks the representation of a tragedy was a religious festival, where the gods bestirred themselves upon the stage and bestowed their wisdom upon men; *our* evil

conscience has so degraded the theatre in public estimation, that it is the duty of the police authorities to forbid any meddling by the stage with religion, a circumstance as characteristic of our religion as of our art. Within the ample boundaries of the Grecian amphitheatre the whole populace was wont to witness the performances; in our chief theatres loll only the affluent classes. The Greeks sought the instruments of their art in the products of the highest culture of the community; *we* seek ours in the deepest social barbarism. The education of the Greek from his earliest youth made him the model of his own artistic treatment and artistic enjoyment, in body as in spirit; our own dull education, fashioned for the most part to fit us for future industrial gain, gives us but a nonsensical, and withal conceited, self-satisfaction in our own unfitness for art, and forces us to seek the objects of any kind of artistic amusement outside ourselves, like the rake who goes for the fleeting delight of mercenary love to the arms of the prostitute. Thus the Greek was himself actor, singer, and dancer; his participation in the performance of a tragedy was to him the highest pleasure in the work itself, and he rightly held it an honour to be chosen on account of his beauty and his culture for this beloved task; we, on the other hand, permit a certain portion of that proletariat which is always to be found in every social stratum to minister to our entertainment; and thus triviality, claptrap, and unseemly haste for fortune-making make up the ranks of our stage-companies. Where the Grecian artist found his only reward in his own delight in the masterpiece, its success and the public approbation, we have the modern artist boarded, lodged, and—paid. Thus are we led to the essential distinction between the two; with the Greeks their public art was art alone, with us it is artistic commerce.

The true artist finds pleasure, not only in the aim of his creation, but also in the very process of creation, in the treatment and moulding of his material; the very act of production is to him delightful and satisfying activity, not toil. The journeyman reckons only the goal of his labour, the profit which his toil shall

bring him ; the energy which he expends gives him no pleasure, it is but fatigue, an inevitable task, a burden which he would gladly give over to a piece of mechanism ; his toil is but a fettering chain. For this reason he is never present in spirit with his work, but ever looking beyond to its goal, which he would fain reach as quickly as he may. Yet, if the immediate aim of the journeyman is the satisfaction of his own impulse, such as the ordering of his own dwelling, his furniture, or his clothing, &c., then, with the prospect of his lasting pleasure from the use of these objects, there enters by degrees into his thoughts an inclination also to such a preparation of the material as shall agree with his own individual tastes. After he has fulfilled the demands of bare necessity, the creation of that which answers to less pressing needs will elevate itself to the rank of artistic production. But if he barter away the product of his toil, all that remains to him is its mere money-value ; and thus his energy can never rise above the character of mechanical activity, and is in his eyes but weariness,—bitter, sorrowful toil. The latter is the lot of the slave of industry. Our modern factories offer us the picture of the deepest degradation of man,—constant labour, killing body and soul, without joy or love, too often without aim.

---

THE CONVERSAZIONE OF THE WAGNER SOCIETY, held at the Prince's Hall, on June 19th, was a complete social success. About six hundred persons were present, and the arrangement of the seats in the hall gave free opportunity for conversation in the interludes between the musical selections. Among the pieces given were the "Siegfried-Idyll" and "Traume" for small orchestra, and the last scene from the "Götterdämmerung," the latter being admirably rendered by Mdlle. Pauline Cramer. The thanks of the Society are specially due to this lady and to Herr Armbruster, the conductor, who, with most of the performers engaged, gave their services gratuitously. The presence of many literary and artistic notabilities among the guests is a good sign of the increasing favour with which our cause is regarded.

REVIEWS. "Richard Wagner's Leben und Wirken," by C. F. GLASENAPP. 2 vols. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel.

THIS work, which want of space has prevented our reviewing earlier, is the most complete biography of the great German master ever yet attempted; and, in truth, we can scarcely imagine that any rival will supplant it as a standard work of reference for the details of Wagner's life. Our only regret is that it should close with the preparations for *Parsifal*, in 1882, and thus leave untold the story of the last few months of the Master's life, and of his death in 1883. The loving hand that has chronicled the varying fortunes of this extraordinary man should now complete its labour.

It is impossible, of course, to do justice in a few lines to a work comprising 900 pages of closely-printed matter; but we must mention one or two of its chief features.

Apart from the chronicle of every event, even of secondary importance, in a life filled full of eventful changes, we have in these two volumes a faithful picture of the man himself in his inner nature. The great characteristic of Wagner's nature, his indomitable tenacity of purpose, comes here clearly to the light. Buffeted by fortune, even till the last few years of comparative peace in the enjoyment of his Bayreuth home, he never lost hold of his one ideal—the elevation of art to the rank almost of a universal religion—and despite countless obstacles, he ever pressed forward to this goal. What other artist has carried in his brain for a quarter of a century such a gigantic conception as the twin progenies, the *Nieblung's Ring* and the Bayreuth *Festspielhaus*? During that long period of gestation they ripened and took more solid form, till at last in 1876, the noble pair were given to the world. Such patience and long-suffering as this heavy work and weary waiting entailed, give Richard Wagner the rank of one of nature's giant-forces, which, repress them as we may, but bide their time, for their effect is sure beyond all question of hours and years. Around the story of this herculean task is grouped the whole of Wagner's life; each antecedent fact leads

to it, and each successor is derived therefrom.

Connected with the history of the evolution of Wagner's genius, Herr Glasenapp gives us many an interesting picture of his relations with artists, some well-known to fame, some rescued from oblivion by their lot having been cast with his. The warm friendship that he inspired in those with whom his calling brought him into personal contact, and the enthusiasm of the younger school of musicians for this arch-innovator, are found recorded in almost every chapter. We may instance the following passage, quoted from Wagner's own writings:—the young tenor, Schnorr (who died just when his marvellous talents were unfolding), had expressed to Wagner his reluctance to take the rôle of Tristan, because he had found difficulty in understanding the proper musical expression of *one* passage. Wagner explained it to him, and "at once he seized its meaning and eagerly embraced his task. The doubt as to the rendering of one phrase had made him diffident of his ability to take up the whole impersonation. He never thought of 'cutting' the passage, in the way in which our popular opera tenors are so ready to help themselves out of a difficulty, for he recognized that this phrase was the very apex of the pyramid to which the tragic tendency of this *Tristan* towered up. Who can measure the hopes with which I was filled, since this wonderful singer had entered into my life!"

The German journals, for the most part, were not equally enthusiastic, as we find recorded in many a page of Herr Glasenapp's book. In fact, the history of the almost life-long persecution of Wagner by the press, culminating in the violent attacks made upon him by that of Munich, is one of the saddest pieces of reading with which we have ever met. The bigotry of the nineteenth century here reached its climax. Only his own indomitable energy kept him from succumbing to this persecution. As our author says, "What supported Wagner, at all times and under the most exhausting fatigues, was in no wise a strong constitution, but, with all his impressionability of temperament, an unheard-of



energy of *will* which puts to shame the passive indifference of our age, and, above all, a lofty aim and belief—things which we are too loath to even hear mentioned."

Not the least valuable portion of this work is contained in the synopses which the biographer gives of the prose-writings of the master. Those who have not the leisure to study the great essays on "The Art-Work of the Future," "Opera and Drama," &c., &c., will find herein a short cut to the principal theories of Wagner as to art, and his views on modern civilization and culture. These essays are condensed by Herr Glasenapp into a few pages, which, though they lose thereby the telling force with which Wagner attacks his subject on every side till he gathers all his power for the final charge, yet convey a wonderfully clear idea of the aim that Wagner set before him.

We cannot close this notice without quoting the author's interesting account of Wagner's method of composition. "In composing, his first task was always the greatest. He never approached the actual composition until the whole musical structure of a work, and of each entire act, stood firm before the eye of his soul; and this was complete, even while the poem was in course of writing. The musical sketch was confined to one line, even in the most complex portions of his dramatic tone-poems; upon the empty lines between only a note here and there was jotted down as a reference for future working-out—so surely could he rely on every point upon his memory (not till the third act of "Siegfried" were three lines taken into service). Thus he worked at the "Meistersinger," generally from eight o'clock in the morning until five in the afternoon, without leaving his study; at the latter hour he would meet the rest of the household at dinner, and spend the rest of the day in their company. In the evening he allowed himself the pleasure of a walk, during which his mood was generally serious, whereas in the house he was full of conversation and humour. ○

In conclusion we can only say that the musical world is deeply indebted to Herr Glasenapp for the elaborate portrait, given in these volumes, of the greatest modern musician.

"Review of the New York Musical Season 1887-8," by H. E. KREBHIEL.  
—Novello & Ewer.

THIS summary is of great interest, recording as it does every musical event of importance in the great Western Metropolis. Passing by criticisms of Verdi's *Otello*, and of the pianoforte playing of little Hofmann, we must specially notice the references to German opera. We are told that, "in the face of the innumerable assertions, that the giving over of one-half the repertory to Wagner was the cause of the falling off in receipts, the fact must be cited that the Wagnerian dramas throughout the season were worth \$750 a night more than the rest of the list, and this notwithstanding that there were but two Wagnerian *novelties* and three of the others." Mr. Krebhiel, in analysing the *Ring des Nibelungen*, says "Siegfried is a prototype of the American people in being an unspoiled nature. He looks at the world through glowing eyes that have not grown accustomed to the false and meretricious. Wagner dreamed of a regenerated society, whose attitude towards art should be like that which once prevailed in Greece. I love to think that it is not altogether impossible that when the conquest of the continent is completed, and the social amalgam of the American people has become fixed, something like the Hellenic ideal may here be realized."

\* \* \*

MESSRS. H. GREVEL & Co. have sent us Dr. Hueffer's translation of the Wagner-Liszt correspondence. The translator has done his work literally, and has introduced the letters by a short preface, in which he deals with the friendship of the two men, remarking that "Liszt, from the beginning, realises, with a self-abnegation and a freedom from vanity almost unique in history, that he is dealing with a man infinitely greater than himself, and to serve the artistic and personal purposes of that man he regards as a sacred duty." In passing judgment upon the letters, Dr. Hueffer says, "He is plain and lucid enough where the ordinary affairs of life are concerned, but as soon as he comes upon a topic that really interests him, be

it music or Buddhism, metaphysics or the iniquities of the Jews, his brain gets on fire, and his pen courses over the paper with the swiftness and recklessness of a racehorse." He then goes on to say, "His meaning is always deep, but to arrive at that meaning in such terrible letters—for example, as those numbered 27, 35, 107, 255, and many others—sometimes seems to set human ingenuity at defiance." We think that Dr. Hueffer would not find this task so difficult if he would read a little German metaphysics; for instance, we may quote from the "terrible" letter, 107, the following: "The state of lovelessness is the state of suffering for the human race; the fulness of this suffering surrounds us now, and tortures our friends with a thousand burning wounds; but, behold, in it we recognise the glorious necessity of love: *we* call to each other and greet each other with the power of love, which would be impossible without this painful recognition." If such passages are obscure, then we may as well go back to the ordinary commonplace of daily life. To our mind, the great charm of the letters lies in these very passages, where we may find ample food for thought, if we care to ponder.

The letters themselves we have already partially dealt with in No. 1 of "The Meister." With the exception of a few letters, in which Wagner asks his friend for a not uncommon display of friendship, a modest loan, or even gift, at times when he was utterly unable to earn anything by his work, and which, we think, were of too private a nature for publication, we are glad that the English public should have this opportunity of studying an artistic friendship of such calibre at first hand.

We have also received a pamphlet entitled "The Significance of Wagner's *Parsifal*," by E. Schlaeger, translated by Miss Coleman. The idea of the little essay is admirable, and with the author's views we thoroughly agree, when he says that "from the stage of the Wagner theatre the spirit of moral initiation has taken, and is destined further to take, issue, which will be the means of giving ideal furtherance and depth to kindred efforts in the realms of modern ethics." It is to be regretted that the translator has adhered so closely to the German

idiom, for, in many sentences, the meaning has been thereby obscured.

\* \* \*

It is impossible, with the limited space at our disposal, to give more than a passing glance at the eight Richter Concerts which have taken place since our last issue. These included symphonies by Beethoven in B flat and A; by Brahms in D; by Haydn in C; by Mozart ("Jupiter"); by Schumann in D minor, and by Stanford, the vitality of whose "Irish" symphony is a gratifying sign of our awakening musical life. The sixth concert was devoted to Berlioz's "Faust," but expectations were not altogether realized, on account of shortcomings in the choral department. These, however, were atoned for at the final concert by one of the finest performances we can call to mind of Beethoven's Mass in D, the terrible exactions of which were met by all concerned with a spirit little short of heroic.

Of the numerous Wagner excerpts, three, heard for the first time at these concerts, claim special notice: Hagen's "Wacht," finely rendered by Mr. Henschel, the closing scene from "Götterdämmerung," sung with great dramatic power by Miss Pauline Cramer; and the "Forging of the Sword" from the first act of "Siegfried," to which Mr. Edward Lloyd lent the attraction of his matchless voice. It was not perhaps altogether the voice of Siegfried, in his vigorous moods especially, but it was very delightful to hear, nevertheless. Mr. William Nicholl displayed much intelligence in his rendering of the remarkable strains allotted to the dwarf Mime. Performances of the "Faust" and "Tristan" overtures, of the sublime "Death March" from "Götterdämmerung," of the Prelude and "Good-Friday" music from "Parsifal," and of extracts from "Die Meistersinger," five of which were given with the assistance of Messrs. Henschel and Lloyd, will also be remembered among "numbers" most highly appreciated. The performance by Mr. Fritz Hartvigson of Liszt's "Todtentanz," which he had already twice played at the Henschel Concerts, and the *début* of a very youthful violinist, Henry Marteau, who should some day become a power in the musical world, must not be forgotten.

E. F. J.